The imperial spirit

Marx spoke of modes of production, Bourdieu of social reproduction; Durkheim spoke of communities, Max Weber of the individual. But demography and biology, the study of the reproduction and biological production of people, in quantity and quality, are alien to social studies. They focus mainly on power struggles and are oblivious to considering the basic needs of communion to raise the children who may one day produce and reproduce individuals and communities. The African idea of ​​needing a village to raise a child is exotic to the social sciences.

The social relations of care are different from the relations of power. Family relationships are mostly other than power struggles. And it is are more caring than the power that fills the individual basic physical, cognitive and emotional structures used throughout life by each person to establish their social relationships.

The social sciences suffer from exaggerating the differentiation between societies and individuals as if such entities could be watertight with each other. Just as the sciences suffer from exaggerating the differentiation between material and immaterial, nature and humanity, the hard sciences of the social sciences, the world of the bodies of the world of minds, a heritage of Judeo-Christian eschatology fixed by Descartes when he retained the distinction of res extensa and res cogitans. Power struggles occupy not only history books but societal descriptions. Social sciences, therefore, must separate sociology - the study of societies with history - and anthropology - the study of societies without history (because the history of power struggles in these late societies was not produced). This bias omits the possibility of integrating knowledge that exists about each of these worlds artificially separated by the cognitive bias of our civilization and, at the same time, the awareness of the importance and influence of care practices between human beings, in fact, fundamental in the construction of character of both people and societies, deeply embedded in their identities.

As between chicken and egg, between societies and individuals, between humanity and nature, power relations depend on caring relationships and, at the same time, are conditions that shape the effective possibilities for the creation and recreation of practices of human solidarity.

Indeed, the established powers are notoriously concerned with conditioning care relations as a means of maintaining the legitimacy of power relations, class relations, stratification, and social functionalities. This ability of the powers of adult societies that manipulate societies to interfere and manipulate caring relationships and nature, for example through family-induced morale, social, health, school services, is a cultural construct. It resulted from a systematic and continuous effort of evolution and elaboration of the instruments of this manipulation and its extension.

One of the results and instruments of this successful manipulation can be designated by a Foucaultian genealogy: the imperial spirit. That is, the widespread and embodied, unchallenged idea of ​​a fixed human nature of a certain kind - both real, because it works if memory remembers, and unreal, because it didn't work most of the time in existence of the human species.

The estate of mind is an expression that designates what Foucault presented as episteme, the object of his archaeological method, thought unthought from which conscious thoughts emerge and which earned him to be classified as structuralist - which he always denied. The estate of mind is the objective and practical need of people to care for each other, to survive and to live well, individually, in society and as a species. It is a part of Bourdieu's habitus, Durkheim's solidarity, Collins's emotional energies. States of mind are generally so unstable that we are unable to fix them because they depend on our mood, the time of day and year, the company we are in, etc. But they are also easily identifiable by all. Whoever observes other people, when they set up perennial and highly elaborate states of mind, socially and personally, such as professional spirit, body spirit, partisan spirit, class spirit, the revolutionary spirit, the spirit of capitalism, etc., one can easily understand what is going on.

Humankind is a builder of states of mind, with which it adapts in very different ways to the environment with great flexibility and strong rigidity, with creativity and resilience, with great competence and success. Each state of mind is characterized by involving specific ways of producing and reproducing it. In the case of the imperial spirit, it demands options of a) social discrimination, embedded in connotative language, b) a social hierarchization designed as the basis and support for these discriminatory options, and c) an ideological system that fixes and transforms these hierarchical discriminations and can avoid the destructive effect of emerging social contradictions. To avoid the consequences of contradictions between lived practices and other ideological system attacks to imperial connotations and hierarchies.

The imperial spirit, a) has experienced difficulties in reproducing discriminatory connotations favorable to the hierarchization that separates or can re-establish society, b) includes difficulty in organizing the repression of connotations unfavorable to its ideology, c) but mainly depends on the reduction to the unthinkable of the connotations that do not support the imperial spirit. The social negation of the imperial spirit is another cultural construct, which the children refer to saying “the king goes naked”. Imperial spirit represents a society like an adult society and a society only of adults. For the imperial spirit, it will be a society, not an anxious and narcissistic desire for power and superiority, that separates the adult world from the children's world, the human world from nature, the serious world from the protected and playful world of the children's world: the physical reproduction of people, disqualified world, playing with nature.

The disciplinary isolation of demography and biology from the social theories arise from the reduction and even the repression of direct or indirect contest to the imperial spirit. After all, it is the powerful and the Empires that finance sciences and the professional words whose legitimacy depends on their initial scientific education.

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